

INSPECTION REPORT

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**Inspection carried out Under Canon 806
and in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005**

Name of School **St. Mary's R.C. Primary School, Holcombe Drive, Burnley, BB10 4BH**

Inspection date 24th April 2018

Reporting Inspectors Jackie McNally and John Thorpe

Type of school	Voluntary Aided
URN	119703
Age range of pupils	3-11 years
Number on roll	233
Appropriate authority	The Governing Board
Chair of Governors	Alan Hutchison
Headteacher	Ian Jones
Religious Education subject leaders	Christine Hutchinson and Amy Neill
Date of previous inspection	17 th June 2013

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades
Overall effectiveness of the school	3	1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
The quality of Catholic Leadership	3	
The Catholic Life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	2	
The quality of Religious Education (incorporating Word)	3	
The quality of Worship	2	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

St Mary's RC Primary is located in Burnley and is part of St Mary's Parish. It is an average sized primary school with 233 pupils on roll. The school is situated in an area of high deprivation and 37% of pupils are eligible for pupil premium funding. Currently 10% of children have English as an additional language and 15% of pupils have special educational needs. The school was last inspected by Ofsted in February 2017 and was graded 'requires improvement'. The school has gone through a period of staff instability in the last few years and many of the experienced staff moved on and were replaced by NQTs, particularly in Key Stage 2. Most of the staff have been appointed since September 2016.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- **The school reaches out to children and families and provides a high level of care and support in a safe and inclusive environment.**
- **Children's spirituality is developed through a range of high quality worship activities. The chaplaincy team are enthusiastic and passionate about their responsibilities and provide an excellent role model for other children.**

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

Overall St Mary's RC Primary School requires improvement because leaders at all levels needs to monitor and evaluate Religious Education more effectively and to set a clear path to improve the outcomes of pupils work.

St Mary's RC Primary places the children's welfare at the heart of everything it does. A positive and welcoming atmosphere permeates the school and high levels of support are provided for children and their families. The children's behaviour is excellent and they told us how much they loved coming to school and being part of the school family. The Gospel Values underpin all aspects of school life and this is evident in the relationships between staff, children and parents. The senior leadership team are supported by an enthusiastic and committed governing body but monitoring and evaluation activities need to be more rigorous in order to ensure that the school is making continuous progress particularly in the quality of teaching and learning. The parish priest's contribution to the school is valued by the whole school community and the children enjoy the opportunity to take on an active role in masses. The children participate in collective worship with respect and reverence but all children now need to be provided with opportunities to organise and lead class worship on a regular basis. The GIFT team are passionate about their responsibilities and are excellent ambassadors for the school. The governors have a good understanding of the 5Ws but they are not yet known and understood by the children and this is something that could be developed further. The school successfully reaches out to all children and supports their spiritual journey and this has resulted in an increased number of families attending the Sunday mass.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

The senior leadership team place a high priority on nurturing and supporting the children within their care and there is a strong culture of welcome within the school. The senior leadership team have a very good understanding of the school and the Religious Education self-evaluation document accurately identifies the strengths of the school and the areas for improvement. Many of the monitoring procedures have recently been introduced and this means there is currently limited evidence of lesson observations and monitoring of pupil books. The senior leaders are committed and passionate about their roles and understand that once the monitoring and evaluation procedures are fully embedded the teaching and learning and the quality of pupil work should improve further. The governors are fully supportive of the school and demonstrate an excellent understanding of the 5Ws and how these are demonstrated by the children and staff. In order to develop further the school needs to carry out more formalised monitoring and evaluation activities and share these with the governors so that they can provide appropriate levels of support and challenge. The members of the GIFT team were able to talk with enthusiasm about their role and the lunch time worship they organised showed that they have the leadership skills to plan and lead good quality acts of worship. In order to develop their leadership skills further children throughout the school now need to be provided with opportunities to organise independently collective worship and other liturgical events.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness) IS GOOD

Parents feel welcomed into school and they spoke about the opportunities they had to participate in worship and school events. They praised the pastoral support provided for the children and the fact that all staff are committed to helping them and their children feel an integral part of the school family. Many parents praised the level of support provided by the learning mentor who demonstrates a 'genuine interest' in the children which continues even when they move onto high school. The learning mentor is passionate about her role and has established wonderful relationships with the children build upon trust and respect. During the inspection she used a range of resources to celebrate the children's strengths and she encouraged them to value the talents God has given them. There are clear systems and procedures for safeguarding and children know that there is always someone for them to talk to if they have a problem. The school has recently introduced class 'Guardian Angels' so that the children can demonstrate care for each other and the children are enthusiastic about this idea. The Gospel values are manifest in the relationships between children and staff and the behaviour of children is excellent. The school encourages the children to reach out to others in the community and the children carry out fund raising activities for charities such as CAFOD, Caritas and the local refuge. The children also take an active role in supporting the community by delivering flowers to elderly parishioners and neighbours. The children follow in the footsteps of Jesus by demonstrating justice, compassion, reconciliation and love for others.

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (incorporating Word) REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

The school mission statement is known by all children and is given a high priority in the school. The school has correctly identified that the quality of Religious Education requires improvement but the senior leadership team has recognised the areas for improvement and plans to increase monitoring and evaluation activities in order to bring about this improvement. The children's behaviour in lessons was excellent and there are wonderful relationships between the children and staff. The children had the confidence to share ideas and they enjoyed the activities planned during the day of the inspection. Work in pupil books indicates that pupils would benefit from the introduction of more creative approaches to Religious Education and there also needs to be a greater emphasis on differentiation to ensure that all children can access the curriculum at their level. The school has a marking policy but the senior leadership team now needs to ensure that this is being adhered to and an agreed approach to planning would ensure greater consistency throughout the school. During the lessons observed the teachers used a range of different teaching approaches to engage the interest of the children and this helped to maintain a good pace during the lessons. The teachers used effective open ended questions to prompt discussion and explore ideas. The school is keen to improve the quality of teaching and learning and has visited other schools to share ideas and a high focus has been placed on staff development this year. In some lessons the Word of God was evident but the use of Sacred Scripture both in Religious Education lessons and during the school day could be improved further. This will help children's Religious literacy to improve.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS GOOD

The children show respect and reverence when participating in acts of worship and the Word of God was central to all acts of worship observed. During the day the children used prayer, song and drama in their worship. The skills and confidence of the GIFT team were demonstrated during the lunch time worship which included opportunities for prayer, song and quiet reflection. The children particularly enjoyed making shepherd's crooks from pipe cleaners as a symbol and visual reminder of the Good Shepherd. The GIFT team are enthusiastic about their roles and responsibilities and often dedicate additional time to their role. The GIFT team now need to share their skills with all classes so that other children develop the skills and knowledge to lead class worship so that by the end of Year 6 children are able to plan and deliver acts of worship independently. The school has invested a significant amount of money into ensuring that resources are of a high quality and this means that class worship areas are stimulating and attractive. These areas could be further enhanced with the use of more child centred prayers and work. The school has implemented some wonderful ideas to ensure that the children understand the liturgical year, for example, during Epiphany three children dress up as three kings and present a gift to each class. The parish priest encourages children to take an active role in masses and the children clearly enjoy this opportunity. Parents are regularly invited to attend the collective worship and feel an intrinsic part of the spiritual life of the school.

AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- **To ensure that all levels of leadership are involved in rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures in order to bring about further improvements in curriculum Religious Education and worship.**
- **To improve the quality of worship so that all staff and children have the skills to plan and lead high quality and creative acts of worship.**